THE WOMAN'S DREADNOUGHT

Published by the East London Federation of the Suffragettes.

Edited by SYLVIA PANKHURST.

No. 25. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 5TH, 1914. PRICE ONE HALFPENNY.

THIS WEEK'S MEETINGS.

Sunday, Sept. 6th, 3 p.m.—Victoria Park —Miss Bouvier.
8 p.m.—The Women's Hall.
Monday, Sept. 7th, 3 p.m.—The Women's Hall, Bow—Member's Meeting.
8 p.m.—Custom House, Freemason's Road
8.30 p.m.—South Hackney, Swiss Cottage, —Mr. Charles Gray.
Tuesday, Sept. 8th, 2.30 p.m.—Hackney, 30 Churchill Road—Mrs. Scurr.
8 p.m.—Poplar, East India Dock Gates—Mrs. Walker.
8 p.m.—Limehouse, Burdett Rd., and Coutts Rd.—Miss Rickards.
Wednesday, Sept. 9th, 8 p.m.—Poplar, 319 East India Dock Rd.—Miss Lynch.
8 p.m.—Chrisp St.—Miss Somers.
Thursday, Sept. 10th, 3 p.m.—Poplar, 319 East India Dock Rd.—Women's Meeting.
8 p.m.—Canning Town, 124 Barking Rd.—
8 p.m.—Bromley, Knapp Rd.—Mrs. Walker
Friday, Sept. 11th, 8 p.m.—Canning Town, Beckton Rd.—Miss Somers.
8 p.m.—Poplar, Piggott St.—Mrs. Walker.

E.L.F.S.

"COST PRICE"

RESTAURANT,

400 Old Ford Road, E.

2-Course Meals
Price 2d.

12 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Soup 1d. a pint, 7 to 8 p.m.

Meals may be eaten in the Restaurant or taken home.

OUR EMPLOYMENT BUREAU.

We have been able to find some paid employment for women in our restaurant, and orders for women's, babies' and children's underclothing have been given out, but many more are asking for work. Some brush-making has been done.

Several women who make babies' kid shoes have applied to us for work.

A Gentleman's Collar Worker applies for work to do at home.

A Head Mistress living in Wales offers home to a delicate young woman and aged couple as housekeepers, also home for growing girl in healthy district; train fares paid.

Our first "Cost Price Restaurant" was opened on Monday under the management of Mrs. Ennis Richmond Dinner is served from 12 a.m. to 2 p.m., at 2d. a head, and from 6 to 8 p.m., a pint of soup, with bread, may be had for 1d. Food may be bought to take home.

The R. S. P. U. very kindly gave their time to make tables for the Restaurant.

WANTED for our babies milk distribution centres: milk, eggs, in order that the whites may be beaten up in water in cases where milk cannot be digested, barley for making barley water. Doctors and nurses are asked to volunteer for service amongst our babies.

WANTED for our "Cost Price" Restaurants, where dinners are provided at 2d. a head: meat, Fruit and Vegetables and food of all kinds.

The "*Forward*" estimates that 500 rent summonses are being issued in Glasgow each week.

When you are in distress, do not take the food out of your children's mouths to pay the landlord.

Do not allow your neighbours to be driven out.

MUST THEY BE TURNED OUT?

At Tately, in Essex, lives a man who is forty years of age, and who, till seven years ago, was a bricklayer. He then had an accident which caused inflammation of the eyes, and he lost his sight. He learned basket making and so managed to keep his wife and five children. The eldest boy is fourteen and has just left school, and would like to get work but cannot owing to the war. The father, too, now finds that people do not want baskets, and that the materials for making them have gone up in price.

"COST PRICE" RESTAURANT, OLD FORD ROAD.

The mother is delicate and there is a baby of seven months old. The rent, 15s. a month for a 4-roomed house and garden, is two months in arrears.

The landlord is a well-off man who could afford to wait, but he has served the following curt notice:—

"I give you notice to quit the house occupied by you on September 12th. Signed——."

Houses are difficult to get in the country. What can these poor people do?

Our correspondent says:—"Starvation stares them all in the face. Can *anything* be done? They are so thoroughly respectable. I think they deserve help against a landlord who is hard upon them."

We have advised our correspondent to write to the Home Office and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to advise the people to refuse to go, and to stir up the local public to protect them. Also to stir up the local authorities to find work for the unemployed.

But does anyone want any baskets in the meantime?

RENT!

Last week we reported the case of Mrs. P. of Wyke Road, Bow, whose nearly blind husband was taken off to prison for failure, through poverty and misfortune, to send their little girl to school, and whose landlord had written saying he was sending a bailiff with a warrant to distrain because they were in arrears with their rent. The E.L.F.S. agitated busily as soon as the case was brought to our knowledge, and after a few hours negotiation through Parliament and the Home Office, Mr. P. was released and the warrant to distrain was refused.

Several other women have come to us asking for protection against their landlords, and so far no warrants have been issued in these cases. *Come to us if you are in trouble with your landlord.*

EAST LONDON WOMEN AT THE BOARD OF TRADE.

On Wednesday afternoon, September 2nd, a deputation from the East London Federation of the Suffragettes waited on the President of the Board of Trade, Mr. Runciman in Whitehall Gardens.

Miss Sylvia Pankhurst, who introduced the deputation, said that they had come to ask that during the war the Government should control the food supplies, in order to safeguard the interests of the working people who form the immense majority of the population.

In East London the average of wages was very low, and the women were only able to buy the barest necessaries at the best of times. When war first broke out the small consumers of East London had suffered acutely. The mothers had not been able to buy anything like their usual quantity of provisions and a large proportion of families had gone hungry for several days of the week.

To keep the prices down the Government had called a committee of big traders, people interested in keeping prices up. The deputation had come to say that those who ought to form the committee are those who know what the people of the nation can afford to pay. The women were of opinion that the big dealers were making more profit than usual out of the war and that they could well afford to sell cheaper. Miss Pankhurst here read an extract from a letter from one of the largest corn and flour merchants in the North of England, in which he said:—

> "Business has been very brisk for the last month, and markets gradually rising, which always means a fairly good time for us."

The strongest proof that the prices fixed had been unnecessarily high was that so many shopkeepers had been able to charge much less. It was useless for the Government to fix a maximum so high that shopkeepers could not force their customers to pay it; that amounted to leaving the public to keep the prices down for themselves.

There was need for the Government control of the food supplies in order to protect the small shopkeepers as well as the consumers, and proof that many large traders could afford to sell more cheaply was found in the fact that many small East London shopkeepers, who could only afford to buy in small quantities and who therefore bought at a great relative disadvantage, were selling the same food at lower prices than those charged by some of the larger shops in the same district.

The small shopkeepers were suffering great hardships, because whilst the wholesale dealers were forcing them to pay high prices, they could not get high prices from their customers. Many women members of the East London Federation kept little shops and these women knew that the women who came to buy of them could not afford to pay more than they used to do for food and so they, who were no richer than their customers, were in some cases selling commodities at a loss.

The deputation from the East London Federation had come to say that prices must be kept down to what the majority of the people could afford to pay. If this were not done many of the children would die and there would be widespread physical deterioration amongst those who lived.

Normal prices before the war ought to be the maximum now, indeed the maximum was already becoming too high as unemployment and short time were rapidly increasing. Moreover, rates of wages for those in work were liable to go down as strikes were useless now.

If the private traders could not keep the prices down the Government could. It was not for the members of the deputation to work out the details of the scheme. The Government had sources of information and opportunities for gathering it that were not open to them, but they who came from the heart of a district where there was suffering and hardship through the high prices of necessaries, must urge with insistence that the Government should take control of the supplies and keep the prices down. The Government could accomplish this if they would fix the prices at which the farmer, importer, or manufacturer should sell, at a fixed profit, the Government making good the deficit, if any. The Government should also fix the prices, at a fixed profit, at which goods were to be sold in the shop.

It might be objected that if the Government were to make good the deficit in cases where, for instance, an importer was expected to sell goods at a lower price than he had paid for them, the rates and taxes would be greatly increased, but the people had got to be fed somehow. They could not be allowed to starve. To feed them would cost money however it were done. It would be cheaper for the Government to pay something to keep the price of food down than to give it away wholesale. In doing so they would help poor people who were too proud to ask for charity and prevent them suffering more than those who did not find it hard to beg. Moreover, they would prevent unscrupulous people from making enormous profits. Where food had to be given away Government control would facilitate this.

If the Government preferred, they could nationalise the food supply, and put the shopkeepers in as managers at a fixed salary.

In Switzerland the Government had taken control of the food supply. Mrs. Whyte, of Edinburgh (mother of Mr. A. S. Whyte, M.P.), had just returned from Lausanne and had reported that Government price lists were put up in all the shops and that the quantity sold to each customer was restricted. Policemen were stationed ready to be called into the shops in case of overcharging. In order to preserve food for actual

(*Continued on page 99, col. 1.*)

The
Woman's Dreadnought.

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No. 25.—Saturday, Sept. 5th, 1914.

Bravely and willingly we bear our share of the World's burdens. Why, then, deny us the right to Vote, which would dignify our labour and increase our Power of Service.

TO ALL IN DISTRESS.

As the representative of the E.L.F.S. on one of the new Local Representative Committees for the prevention and relief of distress, I am filled with anxiety and impatience. It seems impossible to get to work Hours pass in discussing details of party representation on the various Committees and when we last met on Thursday, I appealed in vain to the Mayor to fix another date for our meeting He said we must wait for the issuing of a Cabinet scheme in accordance with which we must work.

I have written to the Local Government Board and the Cabinet Committee for guidance, sending them our own schemes. They reply "that they contemplate that the local committees will survey the position and make suggestions to the local authorities, to undertake or expedite schemes of work which would provide employment for men or women who have been displaced owing to the outbreak of hostilities."

This does not help us much, but the Barking Local Representative Committee has already got to work on various schemes, noted elsewhere, and we must press for something to be *done* in the Poplar district, and without delay.

All in Bow, Bromley and Poplar who are suffering hardship through the war, should register at the Public Libraries in Roman Road for Bow, in Brunswick Road for Bromley, in High Street for Poplar, and in Glengall Street for the Isle of Dogs.

E. SYLVIA PANKHURST.

THE COMING MEN AND WOMEN.

The Women's Labour Emergency Committee and others are advocating that to relieve the unemployment amongst adult men and women occasioned by the war, boys and girls should be kept at school till 16, and that maintenance scholarships should be provided for them. Such a scheme would be of lasting benefit to our Country in providing for an improved physique and education for the generation of men and women, who, in but a few short years' time, perhaps even before this awful war is over, will be coming forward to take the place of the men and women of to-day.

Excellent though the scheme is and wide though the publicity extended to it has been, opposite councils unfortunately, as yet, prevail.

In the House of Commons the other day, Mr. Charles Bathhurst asked the Prime Minister whether the Government would suspend the Elementary Education Act, so that boys between eleven and 14 could work on farms during the autumn and winter, in order to facilitate the enlistment of young men. Mr. Asquith replied that in many agricultural districts provision had already been made by bye-laws to enable these little boys to be employed and that he thought the local authorities could be trusted to do so in each case.

What a mistake to take these children from school and set them to work in this way, when large numbers of men and women in the towns are workless and can only get the bitter bread of charitable doles to eat!

There may, unhappily, soon be a shortage of men to set to work, if this awful war goes on, but at present many men are workless. In the border counties of England and Scotland there are more women farm labourers than men and there are numbers of women throughout the country who would do this work, that is designed for the little undeveloped arms of children, if they could be taken to where it is to be done.

"I'd go to the front if they would have me and keep my children," I heard a woman flower-seller with a big basket of unsold blooms, saying to her comrade in the bus—and many destitute mothers are echoing her words.

At a Poplar meeting one of our members brought to me a young woman who was weeping because she had not got the money to pay her fare to the hopping fields in Kent. Her husband had deserted her years ago. There is no divorce for the poor, and she had subsequently become the wife, in all but name, of a Reservist who has now gone to the front. She and their two little children were left without a penny, and entitled to nothing from the War Office.

Cannot the Government be prevailed upon to send the wages, to which the soldiers and sailors are entitled—the wages that in no case can be held to be a recompense for the agonies they are enduring—to women such as this?

Allowances from the War Office are only given in respect of those of the children of soldiers and sailors who were born nine months after their parents marriage. Quibbling on this point is both mean and unjust. Surely if it can be proved that the man at the front was looked to by the children as their father, and that he was their support, *he is entitled* to adequate payment from his country to support them, and *they are entitled* to the maintenance of which his service with the colours has deprived them.

E. SYLVIA PANKHURST.

"ENLIST OR GO!"

The Home Office has urged that neither work nor relief shall be given to young single men, but the sentence "enlist or go" is being passed also on many a young husband with a family of little children and a wife with a baby in her arms. One such group came to us to-day. The father had lost his work with the firm for whom he had worked since he left school, through the war. He finds that the war and his youth will prevent him getting any more.

It is a hard thing to be starved into enlistment—to feel that one goes to war, not from free choice, not because one wants to serve and protect one's country, but because one is too hungry to stay away. Mrs. Parsons, when canvassing for the Prince of Wales' Fund in West Ham, met with the case of a man who, after weeks of unemployment, was invalided home from Chatham for nervous debility brought on by the privations he had endured. Recruits who have been starved into enlistment will hardly be able to vanquish well nourished opponents on the field of war.

THE SORDID SIDE.

Speaking in the House of Commons on the Bill which is to give the police power to order the closing of public houses when necessary for the preservation of order, Mr. Tim Healey said that members should not deal with this measure "as temperance men, but as patriots." He thought that the Government should give some assurance that the powers to be given should be put into operation only in consultation with the Naval and Military authorities.

Does Mr. Healey mean that men will fight better or enlist more readily if they have unchecked access to public houses? The suggestion that the Naval and Military authorities would object to the public houses being closed reveals a sordid and sinister point of view. We feel sure that the majority of workmen will repudiate this view of the case, and will agree that a guarantee that families will be adequately cared for, will provide a far greater incitement to recruiting than any amount of drink.

Members of Parliament have asked that the use of grain for the manufacture of alcohol may be restricted. Dr. Leach pointed out that in the year ending September 30th, 1913, 52 million bushels of malt were consumed in the making of beer, but the Home Office so far has refused to take any steps.

HOUSING. WHAT CAN BE DONE ABOUT IT.

To persuade Local Authorities to bestir themselves in the matter of housing is extremely difficult, especially if the schemes proposed relate to extensive slum clearing and rebuilding. Moreover the ordinary ratepayer cannot put much pressure on the Local Authorities over housing questions, as there are many little known regulations behind which the local Housing Committees can take refuge.

But there is one direction in which the individual ratepayer can, with a little trouble, make the authorities take action. This is the matter of isolated insanitary houses. The law, as laid down in the various Housing Acts amounts to this:

In the case of a house in the administrative county of London, let at £40 or less a year (i.e. 15s. 4d. or less a week), there is an implied contract on the part of the landlord to keep the said house "reasonably fit for human habitation." *(Housing and Town Planning Act 1909, sec. 14.)* It is the duty of the medical officer of health to report on any house *not* "reasonably fit for human habitation," and *he is compelled to make a report on the demand of four householders residing near the house in question.* If the Local Authorities take no action on the report of the M.O.H., the four householders can lodge a complaint against the Local Authority with the London County Council.

The Local Authority may persuade the landlord to take in hand the necessary repairs. If he does not do so, it is their duty to close the house, and after the closing order has been in operation three months, if the landlord has done nothing, the Local Authority may either pull down the insanitary dwelling or repair it and recover the cost from the owner.

An important clause provides that "unless the dwelling house has been made unfit for habitation by the wilful act or default of the tenant . . . the Local Authority may make to every such tenant such reasonable allowance on account of his expense in removing, as may be determined by the Local Authority.

In Birmingham where extensive improvements on these lines were carried out a few years ago, a minimum of "Thorough Repair," was established of which the following are some of the provisions.

That where quarry floors have to be taken up because quarries are broken or the floor is damp, the floor shall be relaid on concrete. It is essential to have a solid floor to prevent damp rising into the house from the ground underneath.

That all dirty wall papers be removed, no matter how many layers there may be, and the plaster where necessary made sound and good.

That insanitary brick settles or sinks which always cause damp and bad smells be removed and an earthenware sink with water supply provided, so that tenants may be able to wash without having to go to the yard tap.

That handrails be provided to all staircases.

That filth, when found between floors and ceilings, where it is always dangerous to health, be removed and floors and ceilings be repaired.

That roofs be repaired in such a manner that unless some accident occurs they will keep out the rain for some years to come.

That doors be made waterproof.

That cellars be filled in where it is found impossible to prevent their being a cause of damp and bad smells.

All these things ought to be done to the houses in East London. If the landlord will not do it, get your neighbours to ask the Local Authority to make him do it. Some of the complaints will be quashed by interested persons, therefore the more complaints there are about damp and insanitary houses the better they cannot all be ignored. Do not hesitate to make a fuss about comparatively small things; the landlord is all the more likely to do them rather than lose his rent. Do not be afraid that if the house is put into thorough repair the rent will be raised. If it is, go on paying the old rent—it is very unlikely that the landlord will be able to get a distress warrant for the difference at this time. Even if it takes a long time to get your roof or your floor mended, persevere. If woman's place is the home, it ought to be made a fit place for her. And every repair means work for some man and consequently food for some women and children. This is a way in which even the poorest can help to find work, and useful work, for others.

EMILY D. SHARP.

If you don't know how to set about it, write or come to 400 Old Ford Road, Bow, and we will help you.

PROVIDING WORK.

The Barking Local Representative Committee formed under the Mayor for the relief of distress, has decided to put through the following public improvements to provide employment. To extend the children's paddling lake and join it to the main lake, to level and re-gravel the parks and to lay out the extended park. To make new footpaths across the fields. To fit extra water taps in the cemetery.

The Manchester Corporation is borrowing £60,000 for the buying and laying out of a park and recreation ground of 325 acres in which a lake of 43 acres with an island in the centre will be formed. A main road, five miles long and 80 feet wide is to be cut through the city. The landowners will give the land free and ultimately pay the cost of a road of 50 feet wide. The difference between the cost of a 50 foot and 80 foot road will be paid for by the Corporation, £60,000 contributed by the Road Board being deducted. The Rivers Committee of the Manchester Corporation is arranging for works costing £30,000 and £90,000 in direct labour. £15,000 and £26,000 in direct labour is to be spent by the Corporation on new sewers.

In Manchester, applicants for relief give in their names and addresses at any of the branch free libraries, as though they were merely borrowing a book. The ordinary members of the staffs issuing books write the names and addresses on specially prepared cards, and these are collected twice daily by boy scouts who deliver them at the central office in St. Anne's School, Queen Street.

The relief in the form of food tickets, ranges from 1s. to 6s., the average being 4s. or 5s.—little enough.

A WOMAN QUELLS A MUTINY.

Dr. Katherine Bement Davis, the New York State Commissioner of Prisons, has recently quelled a mutiny amongst the 1,400 men prisoners of the New York penitentiary. Dr. Davis had discovered on her appointment, that drugs were being smuggled into the prison. She had this stopped and 500 drug takers led the uprising.

Dr. Davis at once took up her dwelling in the Penitentiary and called a meeting of the 1,400 to give their ideas as to how a prison should be run. One prisoner had many suggestions to make, she asked him to submit these in writing and sent his paper to the Press to educate public opinion.

On Sunday Dr. Davis preached three separate sermons to the Catholics, the Protestants and the Jews. There was no one to play the organ or to lead the singing so she did these things herself. Next day peace was restored. Dr. Davis has agreed with the prisoners that the striped prison garments are to be abolished and ordinary useful clothes to be substituted. But, better still, she is to introduce a system of self-government as she did in the woman's prison at Bedford Hills. The prisoners cheer Dr. Davis whenever she appears.

The politicians of Jersey City are up in arms against Miss Anita Grish, who has been appointed Superintendent of the Poor Fund in that city, because she has prosecuted men who refuse to support their illegitimate children, regardless of their social position and connections. She recently secured the conviction of an official in the Fire Department and of a prominent physician.

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necessaries, the Swiss Government had ordered that no milk was to be used for the manufacture of chocolate, or flour for pastry. Where the labourers had been withdrawn for military service, the soldiers and policemen helped with the crops, in order that there should be no waste.

In this country there was great waste, especially of fruit. Miss Pankhurst gave particulars of fruit that was known to be left to rot at farms in Kent and Cambridgeshire.

It was known that a good deal of food was wasted at the markets. If the Government would take control of the food supplies they could stop waste. Some of the waste arose because people had not money to buy and because dealers sometimes preferred to throw away food to keep the prices up.

Much waste of food was due to the fact that the railway rates were so high that very frequently it did not pay the farmers to send food to London. The Government had taken control of the railways. Would they not allow food to be carried free, or, failing that, to greatly reduce the freight charges on food all round and to let food travel free for charitable purposes?

Miss Sylvia Pankhurst concluded by saying that she would call on the other members of the deputation, who were the wives of working men, to give their individual experience of the present difficulties, and the way in which they were meeting them. None of the women were in a position to pay the enhanced prices, some were getting into debt, others were going short of food.

Mrs. Parsons, of Canning Town, then said that she could not afford to pay the present prices, and that she and her children had had to go short of food. Sugar for which she had paid 1¾d. before the war was now 3¾d., beans that had been 2½d. a quart were now 4d, and everything else was in proportion. She complained that the big stores had put up their prices beyond those of the the little shops in her district. This was hard on the small shopkeepers. One firm, with shops all over the country, whose name she gave, were charging 1s. for margarine that had been 8d. The firm charged 1s. 2d. and 1s. 3d. for butter. If a customer bought the margarine, she could have sugar at 2½d. per lb., but if she bought butter, she had to pay 3½d. for sugar. She did not see why the women should have to pay more for their sugar because they bought butter instead of margarine, which, she said, was not fit for their children to eat.

Mrs. Parsons added that a friend of hers, who had just returned from Devonshire, was told by the farmer that he would let the Londoners have as many rabbits free as they would skin for him, but he could not afford to pay carriage on the rabbits and on the skins that were to come back.

She complained of the sweating of women by Government contractors. One firm she knew of in Canning Town was paying only 2d. a dozen for finishing shirts, that is to say, sewing on buttons and making buttonholes. The women only earned 6s. or 7s. a week, and out of that they had to find their own cotton. Their fingers were often bleeding because the stuff was so hard.

Mrs. DRAKE gave her own family budget before the war, and at the present time. She said that her husband is a labourer earning 28s. a week, and that she claimed that she worked for her living, because she cared for her home and her children. Out of his 28s. a week her husband kept 2s. 6d. for National Insurance and pocket money. 3s. 8d. a week, that is to say 8d. on five days and 4d. on Saturday, for his breakfast and dinner at work. She therefore had 21s. 10d. "to turn over."

Some of it she spent thus:—

Bought each week.	Before the war.	Now.
5-lb. of sugar	8¾d.	1/5½.
1½-lb. of margarine	9d.	1/-.
2 tins cond. milk	6d.	8d.
7 qtns. of bread	2/11	3/2½. (y/o one week)
Meat	2/6	2/6. (Had to buy less)
	7/4¼d.	8/10.

Flour, biscuits, rice, soap, matches had also increased in price. She could not afford to buy what she did before. She had not made a pudding since the war started, she had bought less meat and cheaper cuts, and had done sewing to make money when she could get it to do. The children's health would suffer and the shopkeepers who depended on her custom would suffer. Mrs. Drake also gave a neighbour's budget:—

Mrs. S.—A widow with eleven children; she receives 11s. a week and 4s. grocery ticket from the Poor Law Guardians. She spends the 4s. grocery ticket thus:—

Before the War.

8 lbs. of Sugar	1/2d.
¾-lb. Tea	1/-.
2½-lbs. of Margarine ...	1/3d.
2 tins of Condensed Milk	6d.
Soap	1d.
	4/-.

Now.

3½-lb. of Sugar	1/2d.
¾-lb. of Tea	1/-.
1¾-lbs. of Margarine ...	1/3d.
2 tins of Condensed Milk	8d.
Soap	1d.
	4/-.

Of course the food she buys with the 4s. ticket is only a small proportion of that consumed by the twelve people. To make ends meet the woman is doing sewing machining, and her younger children are doing the housework. Mrs. Drake said there appeared to be a muddle, the food was on one hand and the people on the other, and the Government in the middle could not get them together. They ought to nationalise the food, many people were considering raids on the shops. She also gave cases in which factories executing Government contracts were working overtime, whilst people hitherto employed at similar work for general use were out of work.

Mrs. Farrall said that she could not make ends meet as she did before the war. Every week she got a little more in debt to the shopkeepers, and her rent was falling into arrears. She did not know how it would end.

She complained of sweating by Army contractors. She said that when she was down at Shoeburyness for her holidays, the wife of the Colonel of the Regiment was arranging for Army shirts to be made at 8s. per dozen, but a man who was a borough councillor in Bow was giving soldiers' shirts out for women to make at 1s. 9d. and 2s. a dozen in Roman Road.

Mrs. Mooré said that the Government ought to take control of the food supplies and ask the women to help them. Women's organisations had brought to light the waste of food that was going on.

Mrs. Payne, a shoemaker of Bow, said that she had been helping to distribute food at the East London Federation's headquarters at 400 Old Ford Road and that if Mr. Runciman could see the poor people coming in with their pinched faces, he would feel with her that something must be done. She said that she and other women she knew had been horrified to read the official price lists in the newspapers.

Mrs. Walker, a docker's wife from Poplar, said that she used to pay 4½d. a pound for 'Canterbury' mutton, the knuckle end, now she had to pay 8½d. From matches to meat everything has gone up. She said that things would never be dealt with properly until women got the vote. Mrs. Walker added that it was useless to talk about a scarcity of flour and sugar, there was tons and tons of it stacked up in the docks, "our men go in and see it, so they know" she said, and Mr. Runciman and his companions fidgetted and looked uncomfortable. "Something must be done for us, said Mrs. Walker, or we shall have to *take* the food!"

Mr. Runciman, in replying, said that he wanted the deputation to understand that the commitee of Traders was not a Government committee, but that it had been formed because the Government had said that prices had gone up to an absolutely unwarrantable height. The traders had formed the committee and had promised that nothing should be sold at prices higher than those they had fixed.

Mr. Runciman admitted that the prices were still too high and that the price quoted for mutton by Mrs. Walker was quite unjustifiable.

Mr. Runciman thought that the deputation did not realize how much the Government had done. They had arranged the difficulties that stood in the way of the importation of meat which had been considerable. They had made very special provision for keeping down the price of sugar. He could not disclose what had been done, but if they had not taken the action which they had taken, the price of sugar would by now have been 8d. or 9d. lb. It was 7d. lb. in New York.*

The Government sympathised deeply with the working women but they could not nationalise every shop.

Miss Sylvia Pankhurst said "You do not deal with our suggestion that you should fix the price at which the importer should sell and the profit he shall make, and compensate him for any deficit there may be."

Mr. Runciman replied, "The Board of Trade has no power to do that." Miss Pankhurst asked, "who has the power?" Mr. Runciman did not reply.

Mr. Runciman then said that with regard to the equalizing of employment, the Board of Trade would arrange that in the giving out of all future Government contracts it should be stipulated that no overtime should be worked.

Miss Pankhurst urged that this should be done in the case of existing contracts.

Mr. Runciman had by this time left Mr. Barnes to terminate the interview and to take notes of further particulars.

Mr. Barnes said he did not know how this could be done.

Miss Pankhurst said: "you could do it if powerful interests were concerned"

Mr. Barnes objected to this being said.

Miss Pankhurst said: "You have passed the Moratorium and made other arrangements to safeguard the powerful interests."

Mr. Barnes promised to see if any arrangements could be made.

Mrs. Walker asked for a guarantee that poor people should not be turned out because they could not pay their rent during the war.

Mr. Barnes was afraid this could not be done, but would report what had been said.

Matters were raised in the discussion on which both Mr. Runciman and Mr. Barnes advised interviews with the War Office and the Local Government Board.

*[An American lady tells us it is 7 *cents* i.e. 3½d. not 7d.]

BUSINESS IS BRISK.

In a type-written letter to a relative who wrote to ask him why the price of bread had gone up, one of the largest wholesale corn and flour merchants in the North of England wrote on August 28th:

"With regard to the wheat situation, the prices of course have advanced very materially since the outbreak of the war, but there is no doubt that in the ordinary course of events prices would have gone up anyway during the last month or six weeks. We, that is Europe generally, happen to be more or less dependent on the United States and Canada for the bulk of our wheat supply. The crops are good in these two countries: in fact the United States have a record one. Naturally, however, the wily American seeing this, is not going to let us have our wheat very cheap. The present price for American wheat is 39s. per 480 lbs. This is not a very extravagant price, but 6s. or 7s. a quarter higher than this time last year. I do not think anybody in particular has made much profit out of the advance in the market. Neither the baker, miller, nor the merchant seem to have held large stocks at all. Fortunately there will be no fear of a scarcity of wheat for us with Canada and the United States within what is considered now a safe and easy distance. No doubt we shall have to pay a fairly full price to buy during the next six months. The River Plate promises to have a fair crop, and they will start shipping that in January or February."

In a familiar postscript in his own handwriting he added:

"Business has been very brisk for the last month and markets gradually rising, which always means a fairly good time for us."

Thus the retail buyers and especially the working women who have but little to buy with, may plainly see that whilst they have been suffering through the war, the wholesale corn and flour merchants have been prospering exceedingly.

VICTIMS OF WAR.

In Bow & Bromley.

Mrs. B.—Coat finisher, very little work since war began, only 4½d. on 31st Husband casual labourer earning 15s. a week, out of work six weeks, cannot get a job because of war. Six children, ages four months to eleven years. Rent 4s. for two rooms.

Mrs. B.—Five young children, expecting another any day, two children have dinner at school. Husband dock labourer out of work through war. Landlord has given notice to quit. Pawned everything and now starving.

Mrs. F.—Young widow with two children, one and-a-half and three and-a-half years. Parish allows 7s. a week. Rent 3s. 6d., insurance 4d. Works at home making children's underclothing, gets 4d. for a dozen chemises, 4d. for a dozen petticoats. No work now on account of war.

Mrs. B.—One baby, expecting another next month. Rent 2s. 6d. for one room. Husband labourer in a glassblower's factory, working short time now, earned 7s. last week, factory closing down Wednesday.

Mrs. B.—Husband a gardener, not regular work for eight years, now out of work. No money coming in, rent 5s. for three rooms. Eight children four months to 15 years. Child two-and-a-half has measles.

Mrs. McK.—Husband casual docker. Six children, twins two months, oldest 13 years. Been feeding babies on boiled bread, having nothing better to give them. All beautifully clean.

Mrs. R.—Husband fish porter on steamer, Billingsgate, out of work through war. Five children, two weeks to eight years. No money since maternity benefit. Had lodger who has gone to war.

Mrs. O.—Husband a japanner working only three days through war, when full time gets 25s. Six children, youngest twins six months, eldest eight years.

Mrs. N.—Husband cabinet worker, out of work since war began. Five children, expecting another. Rent 7s. 6d. four rooms, three weeks in arrear.

Mrs. W.—Five young children, expecting another any moment. Rent 4s. for two rooms, five weeks in arrear, notice to quit given, pawned nearly everything. Two of the children fed once a day at school, no food in the house.

Mrs. B.—Anxious to get charing work. Eight children from 14 years to four months. Husband odd job man cannot get work through war. Rent 5s.

In Canning Town.

Mrs. Parsons the E.L.F.S. hon. sec. for West Ham, who is appointed to visit soldier's and sailor's wives for the West Ham Local Representation Committee under the Mayor, sends us the following typical cases:—

Mrs. G.—Two children with measles and one with pneumonia, no food in house, and no money since Aug. 15th. Reservist's wife.

Mrs. S.—Reservist's wife, married 4 years and 8 months with four children is getting 1s. 9d. per day.

Mrs. H.—Sailor's wife, did not know which ship her husband was on, five children at school, cried when I gave her 10s.

Mrs. C.—Son gone who was her sole support. Had to go for bread to relieving officer, and she says she does not want to be pauperised.

Mrs. A.—Husband gone to the front and she gets 1s. 1d. a day, has a baby three months which has to be bottle fed. Does not receive pay for it as husband forgot to register it.

DISTRICT REPORTS.

BOW AND BROMLEY.

Organiser (pro tem.)—Mrs. Bouvier.
321 Roman Road, Bow, E.

Good meetings have been held at Chrisp Street and other open-air pitches, and at the Women's Hall on Sunday. Canvassing is going on steadily and more volunteers for this splendid work are needed. Thanks to all those who canvassed and helped at the stall last week. Members went lobbying at the House on Tuesday. More helpers for the stall (Friday, 6-10 p.m., Saturday 11-1 o'clock and 6-10 p.m.) are needed. Even one hour of help will be of the greatest assistance.

Dreadnoughts sold week ending Aug. 28:—
Central 284. Bow and Bromley 282.
Mrs. Payne 61
Miss Roach 72
Miss Winter 51

DISTRIBUTED.

Mrs. Knudson and Mrs. McCheyne, 350; Mrs. Connell and Mrs. Moore, 250; Mrs. Savoy, 250; Mrs. Carlisle, 200; Mrs. Mrs. Watkins, 200; Mrs. Clarke, 200; Mrs. Mantle, 200; Mrs. Pascoe, 100; Mrs. Lake, 100.

POPLAR.

Office—319 East India Dock Road.
Organiser—Miss Mary Phillips.

Thanks are due to members who went lobbying to the House of Commons on Tuesday. Mrs. Schlette and Mrs. Hicks have taken charge of milk distribution at 319 East India Dock Road. Good meetings at East India Dock Gates and Piggott Street. Mrs. Drake will be in charge of the work during the Organiser's absence.

SOUTH WEST HAM.

Hon. Sec.—Mrs. Daisy Parsons,
94 Ravenscroft Road.

During the past week members have been lobbying Members of Parliament to take control of food supplies. Six of our members have registered themselves for relieving distress cases. This proves to be an excellent way of canvassing. There will be no indoor meeting next Thursday at 124 Barking Road. Mrs. Bouvier spoke at the "Peacock" on Monday, and Nurse Smith on Thursday, gave a very interesting speech on "Health of the Children."

91 *Dreadnoughts* sold week ending Aug. 28.

Canning Town. Dist. leader—Mrs. Millo, 1 Ravenscroft Rd. Distributors—Mrs. Layton and Mrs. Tidmarsh.
Plaistow. Dist. leader—Mrs. Hawkins, 29 Beaufoy Rd. Distributor—Mrs. Cook.
Custom House. Dist. leader—Miss Leggett, 74 Chauntler Road. Distributor—Mrs. Pullen.
Tidal Basin. Dist. leader—Miss Penn, 10 Brent Rd. Distributor—Miss Greenleaf.
Silvertown. Dist. leader—Miss G. Grimes, 27 Newland St. Distributors—Miss Nicholas and friends.

OTHER EAST LONDON SOCIETIES.

R. S. P. U.

Hon. Sec.—J. W. Bonarius, 89 Wyke Road.

Meetings as usual on Wednesday and Friday to urge the Government to take over food supplies and give Votes to Women. Tickets for benefit concert in aid of Comrade Wise, of R.S.P.U. and Gas Workers' Union, may be had from any member of the R.S.P.U. We are holding a social in the Women's Hall on Saturday, September 19th. Those who are in distress through the war are asked to give full particulars to J. W. Bonarius, at the above address, any evening; he will then forward same to Labour Members on the Central Committee formed to relieve distress in this district.

50 *Dreadnoughts* sold week ending Aug. 28.

GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGED.

Anon 5/-, Mrs. Baillie Weaver £1, Ben Webster, Esq., £5, Mrs. Adshead £5, Miss Glicksten £4, Mrs. Robinson 5/-, Tom Norris, Esq. 10/-, Miss Lucie James £1, Miss E. Limousine 2/-, Mrs. Fels £5, Mrs. & Miss Hicks £2, Miss Griffiths 2/-, Miss McMunn £1, Anon 10/-, Miss H. Newcomb £1, Mrs. Mansel Pleydell £1, Mrs. E. M. Morrison £1, Miss F. M. Collier £2, Miss Setchfield 2/6, Miss E. Gore Browne £1, Misses Sidney Woolf 3/-, Miss Mgt. Douglas 2/-, Miss G. Lambert 2/-, Signora Pascoli £1, Anon 4/-, Miss Baillie 7/6, Mrs. Bullied 10/-, Miss Norbury £1, Miss Wells 10/-, Mrs. Singer £1 15/-, Sandy Kirkwood, Esq. 2/6, Miss Hancock 5/-, Miss Hardy £1, Anon £1, Two Suffragettes £2, Miss Carter £3, Miss Jane Lomax 2/6.

For Milk and General Distress:
Mrs. Haverson £2/2-, Mrs. A. E. Wenner £1, Mrs. Baillie Weaver £1, W. R. Garrett 10/-, Mrs. and Miss Douglas £1, Miss Llewellyn Davies 10/-, Mrs. O. K. Simes 12/-, Miss F. E. Rowe £1, E. A. D. White, Esq. 10/-, Anon £1, Anon £6, Mrs. Beverley 5/-, Mrs. M. E. Dunn £1, Mr. & Mrs. Stuckley £2, E. W. Brand, Esq. £1, Mrs. Julie Morris 5/-, Miss F. M. Thomas 10/-, per Miss G. Stewart £1/9/0, Mrs. Richmond 10/-, Mrs. Renny 10/-, F. A. Carlton Smith, Esq. 2/-, A. Postmistress 10/-, Free Church Suffragist 1/-, per International Suffrage Shop £2/2/6, Mrs. Hanson 2/6, A Working-woman 1/-, Miss Kidd 5/-, Mrs. Warry 5/-, For Milk, etc. 2/6, Miss K. Wells 10/-. Mrs. Seimens £1.

Eggs—Mrs. Pike, Miss Durham, Mrs. Burke, Misses Spong.
Barley, etc.—Mrs. Ferguson and others.
Milk—Mrs. Alger, Harrow C.L.W.S. per Mrs. Foxwell.
Fruit & Vegetables—Miss Fedden, A Friend.

A. E. WAKEFIELD, 259 Old Ford Road, Grocer.—General Stores.—Goods of best quality. Clubs held.

OUR DEMANDS.

(1) That during the war the food supply shall be controlled by the Government in the interests of all the people, in order that all may feed or starve together, without regard to wealth or social position. To make sure that the food supply is properly controlled, we demand that working women shall be called into consultation in fixing the prices to be charged for food, and the way in which the food shall be distributed.

(2) That committees with Governmental power shall be formed to provide employment for men and women at trade union rates; women to be paid at equal rates with men for equal work.

(3) That the Moratorium be extended to rent and debts under £5 as well as to debts over £5, as it is of vital importance that homes shall be kept together, and the poor who have contracted debts under £5, which are large in proportion to their income, need this relief as much or more than the rich.

(4) That working women shall be placed on all committees for fixing food prices, and for providing employment and relief.

(5) That the Parliamentary franchise be immediately granted to women in order that they may help in minimising, as far as possible, the horrors of war.

OUR DUTY.

The East London Federation of the Suffragettes has offered what service it can give to the mayors in the districts where its work lies. To lend aid to the relief committees is not a thing for which anyone need wish to take special credit; it is the ordinary instinct of humanity to do what one can at such a time of exceptional crisis and distress. The members of the Federation are mostly poor and busy women; they cannot give so much in money as Duchesses and millionairesses, but they know by experience the needs of working women. The Federation feels that its principal duty is to bring pressure to bear on the Government, which has much greater power to attend to such matters than any number of private individuals, to secure justice for the women, and especially the working women of the country.

If women had the vote the prospect of securing justice in all such matters would be brighter, but in the meantime the Federation is determined to do what it can to keep the working women's point of view to the fore.

WE ALSO URGE.

That all vacant pieces of waste ground in crowded districts be purchased, and that these be used both for building cottages with gardens and for laying out playgrounds for the children living in existing cottages without gardens and situated far from a park.

That housing and drainage improvements be carried out wherever there is need, and especially in the streets in the neighbourhood of Suffolk Street and Sussex Street, in the North Ward of Poplar, in order that the lower rooms in these streets may not be, as at present, flooded with foul smelling water during spring tides and in heavy rains.

That the Local Representative Committees co-operate with the Borough Council with a view to these schemes being carried out by the aid of a portion of the £4,000,000 building grant which has been set aside under the New Emergency Housing Act, and that the Local Representative Committee approach the Local Government Board, the Cabinet Committee, and the Prince of Wales' Fund for any financial or other assistance that may be necessary.

That the Borough Council be approached and asked to arrange that the dust pails shall be emptied every day instead of twice a week as at present, and that larger pails with lids shall be provided, in order both to provide employment and to improve the sanitary conditions.

All work to be paid for at Trade Union rates and women to receive the same pay as men when doing the same work.

That the Local Representative Committees open as many factories as may be necessary to provide work for unemployed garment and shoe and hat makers, and that home work for women be given out in conjunction with these factories. Clothing made to be afterwards given free of charge in necessitous cases.

That the Local Representative Committees open factories for food preserving, the Government to be asked to carry food free of charge on the railways for use in these factories. Freight charges for food in ordinary use to be greatly reduced. The Food preserved in the Local Representative Committee's Factories to be used under the direction of the Committees and chiefly for necessitous cases.

That the Local Representative Committee establish as many restaurants as may be necessary, where food may be sold cheaply for consumption on or off the premises and free tickets for which may be given by the Ward Sub-Committee in necessitous cases.

That the Local Representative Committee approach the Local Government Board, the Cabinet Committee, and the Prince of Wales' Fund for any financial or other assistance that may be necessary. All work to be paid for at Trade Union rates, and women to receive equal pay with men when doing the same work.

That the scheme set forth in the Memorandum issued by the Local Government Board on mother and child welfare, including free clinics, systematic medical advice at home and hospital treatment for expectant and nursing mothers and infants under school age, be adopted and that to it shall be added the provision of free milk for babies in every case in which it can be shown that the family is not able to provide for the baby as much milk as a child of its age ought to have, the milk to be provided, either on the recommendation of the nurse or doctor, or in response to an application by the father, mother or guardian.

Also that expectant mothers and their children under school age shall be given adequate nourishment, either by the provision of meals at a food centre, or by food tickets, or by payment in cash on the advice of a doctor or their own application, when it can be shown that the mothers are unable themselves to provide what is necessary. The meals should be connected with doctoring in order that the right kind of nourishment may be supplied.

That free meals for the school children shall be given on Saturday, Sunday and other holidays, and that children whose parents are receiving Poor Law Relief shall not be disqualified on that account.

That the Local Representative Committee appoint a number of women inspectors to investigate the local food prices and report with a view to prosecution where extortion is proved.

That hospitals in the locality be asked to remit fees in necessitous cases during the war, and in all cases of young children.

That where a woman has been living as the wife of a man who is in the Regular Forces or Reserve, and is the mother of his children, and he has been her financial support, she shall be entitled to the same allowance as though she were legally married to him.

That the present allowance for soldiers' and sailors' families be increased to a minimum of £1 and a maximum of £2 per week, in order that they may be spared the humiliation and serious inconvenience to which they are put, and the interference with their work both domestic and wage earning, which arises through their being obliged to attend and wait their turn each week for additional and often inadequate grants of money from the Prince of Wales' fund.

POLICE WOMEN.

ARE THEY LEGAL P

The Home Office states that it is of opinion that an Act of Parliament will be necessary to enable women to be sworn as constables or special constables, with power of arrest. Nevertheless two women have been duly sworn as special constables at Sandgate, in Kent.

Sir George Sherston Baker wrote to the *Times* of July 29th asserting that there was "ample authority" for the appointment of women constables, and in support of his view said:—"I say authority, because the numerous statutes which have interlaced the common law of England may have affected the immediate possibility of such appointments without a new Act of Parliament. That is a mere question of careful perusal of the Statute-book. But I desire to point out that such authority does exist. In the 28th year of George III. (1788) the appointment of a woman overseer was debated in the King's Bench. The Court allowed the validity of the appointment. Mr. Justice Ashhurst in giving the judgment of the Court said: 'There are many instances where women in offices of a higher nature are held not to be disqualified, as in the case of the office of High Chamberlain, High Constable, and Marshal, and that of a common constable.' (2 Term R. 395).

To this I may add that the celebrated Ann Countess of Pembroke, Dorset, and Montgomery had, according to Coke, the office of hereditary sheriff of Westmorland (civil and criminal) and exercised it in person. At the assizes at Appleby she sat with the Judges on the bench.

I could cite other instances, but will only add one more—that of Lady Braughton, who, as it appears from Keble's Reports, was in 1684 the Keeper of the Prison of the Gate House of the Dean and Chapter of Westminster."

It is now generally admitted that policewomen would be helpful in aiding homeless women and children, and in difficult cases concerning them, but in some quarters doubts are expressed of their power to attain all-round efficiency.

Even the most burly of male policemen is not always an athlete and prizefighter. In Bow recently six policemen were unable to take one young amateur boxer to prison, and reinforcements had to be called up. Women constables would have the same power to blow a whistle for reinforcements that the policeman has, but there are other ways also of enforcing authority.

Here is an extract from the June *19th Century and After*:—"In Denver, Colorado, there has been a woman in the police force since 1912. I was told in 1913 by friends living in the town that she had revolutionised the treatment of the young offender. 'The best man on the Denver Police force happens to be a woman,' said the chief of the police. . . . Miss Roche is the daughter of well-to-do parents, a graduate of Vassar College and a post-graduate of Columbia University. After having worked in a settlement in New York she lived in the Italian quarter there, studying the difficulties and temptations of the Italian emigrants. When she first took up the work of policewoman she tried to avoid the necessity for actual arrests. When she made the rounds of the places of amusement she did not say to the managers 'Do so and so or I will have you summoned.' She talked earnestly to them and spoke of the assaults and seduction that result from the nightly swarming of mere children to such places of amusement. She appealed to their sense of decency and love of family, and her policy turned the managers into active supporters of the law. She made the acquaintance of the leaders of the gangs of young hooligans. She refused to consider them as criminals, and she astonished the police when they found that these young ruffians responded to her appeals to their better nature. There is a story of an energetic policeman who went in the course of his duty to a dance hall. His presence was resented by the young Irishmen present and one of them struck him violently. A fight began and the policeman was getting the worst of it, when suddenly Miss Roche appeared on the scene. She stopped the fight with a few stern words and then escorted the policeman to a place of safety."

VOTES FOR WOMEN MEETINGS

Women's Hall, Old Ford Road, E.,
EVERY SUNDAY,
at 8 p.m.

TO SOLDIERS' AND SAILORS' WIVES.

You are entitled to 1s. 7d. a day for yourself if you live in the London postal area, not 1s. 1d. Write to the War Office if you do not get it.

If you are in distress, register at the nearest Public Library.

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